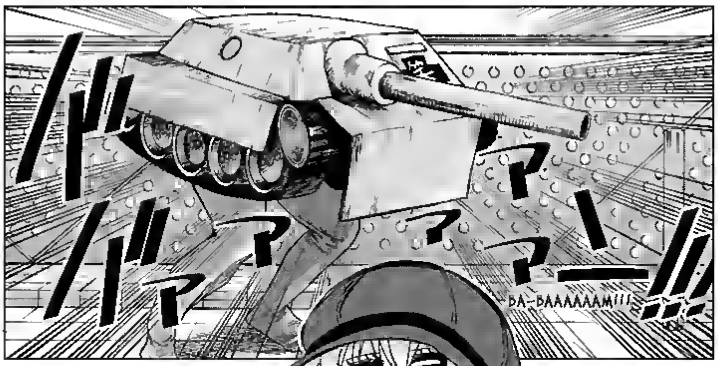
DON'T BECOME AN
篠崎さん気をオタしかに!
OTAKU, SHINOZAKI!
COME COSPLAY WITH US!
HiKAWA SHOU
CHAPTER 33: AN EXPLOSIVE MASQUERADE

SUMMARY OF EVENTS SO FAR:
AMY AND THE IDIOT KONATSU TURNED OUT TO BE FRIENDS AND AKINA'S PEACEFUL LIFE IS NOW IN DANGER.
SHE REALLY WAS A NINJA!
EHHHHH, SERIOUSLY!?
NO, THIS GIRL IS NOT A NINJA.
SOM... SOMEHOW I MANAGED TO GET AWAY IN ONE PIECE...
I GUESS THAT'S WHAT YOU'D CALL A CLOSE CALL...
Hmm なお
Hmm なお
2
AND THEN SHE ARRIVED AT A PLACE THAT FILLED HER WITH DEJA VU
BUT STILL...

DA-DAM
Photoshop Transparency
Wimbose II
BAM


DA-DAAAAAAM!!!

THIS PLACE HASN'T CHANGED THESE PEOPLE SURE ARE SOMETHING...
I mean, is it okay to cosplay that?

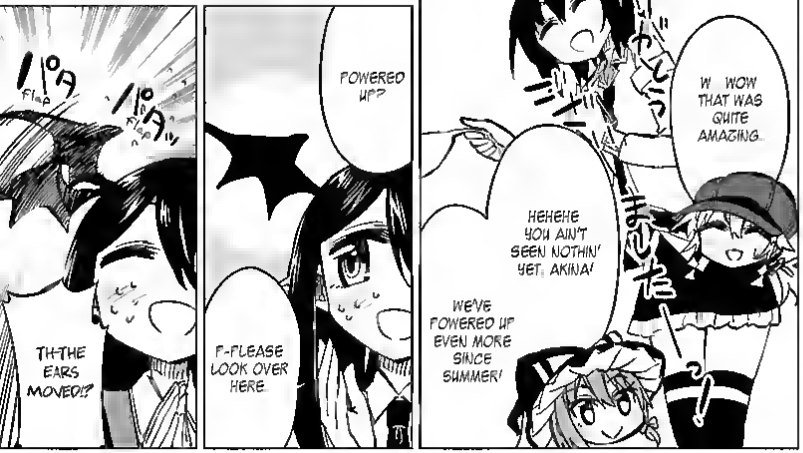
うお
U-UH, I'VE GOT THE WRONG PERSON!!
SORRY, BUT I'D RECOGNISE THAT WEIRD FACE ANY-WHERE...
お
おおお
H-GYAA!?
びくっ
...HUH? ISN'T THAT AKINA?

YOU DID THAT THIS SUMMER TOO, IS IT SUPPOSED TO BE A JOKE OR SOMETHING?
HELLO, AKINA
OH, IT'S JUST HIBARI AND AYU...
Don't surprise me like that

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'JUST'?
ARE YOU GUYS DOING "HONG KONG PROJECT" AGAIN?

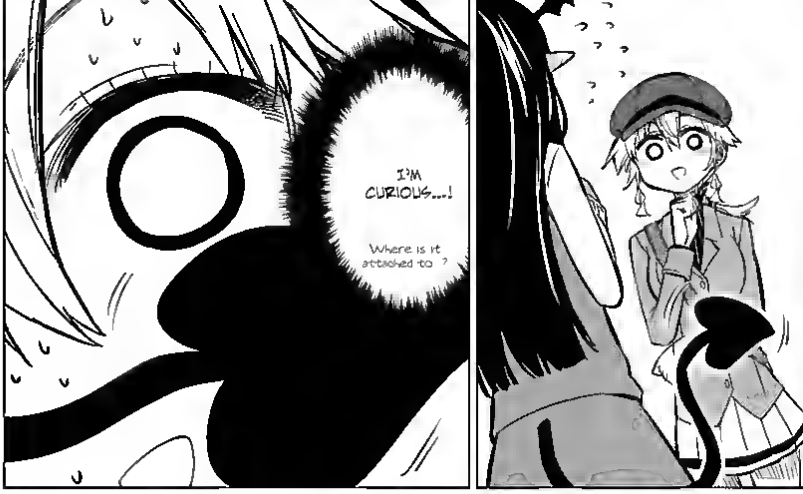
4

I AM THE NAMELESS, MYSTERIOUS BOOK DEMON, AND...
Flash
Flash
Flash
I AM MUSHROOM MASTER, FROM THE FOREST OF MAGIC!


W... WOW THAT WAS QUITE AMAZING.
HEHEHE YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET, AKINA!
WE'VE POWERED UP EVEN MORE SINCE SUMMER!
POWERED UP?
F-PLEASE LOOK OVER HERE...
TH-THE EARS MOVED!?
Flap
Flap

HEHEHE THESE ARE DEVIL EARS THAT MOVE WITH YOUR BRAINWAVES!!
Were you surprised?
AND THEY'RE SURPRISINGLY CHEAP!
5,940YEN!!
HOW?
F... PLEASE DON'T USE CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY FOR THINGS LIKE THIS
So this is how far the Way of Cosplay goes.

WELL, MOVING EARS ARE GREAT AND ALL, BUT...


I'M CURIOUS...!
Where is it attached to ?

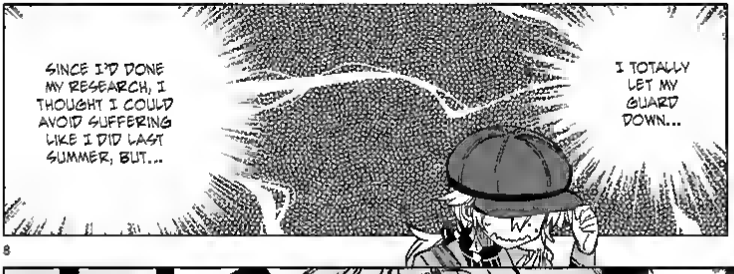
UH-OH, THIS IS BAD!
S SURE, MAYBE NEXT TIME
COSPLAY IS FUN, YOU KNOW
W-WE EVEN HAVE SPARE COSTUMES YOU COULD USE~
THE SIZE MIGHT BE A LITTLE OFF, THOUGH
EH!? AH, CO COSPLAY!?
HEY, HEY, WHY DON'T YOU TRY COSPLAYING TOO, AKINA?

OSPLAY IS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST PUTTING ON SOME CLOTHES! BECAUSE IN ORDER TO BECOME A CHARACTER, SIMPLY PUTTING CLOTHES ISN'T ENOUGH TO EXPRESS THEIR TRUE NATURE! AS CH, WE MIGHT SAY THAT IT IS RATHER CLOSE TO PLAYING A TRPG! COSPLAY, INSTEAD OF DRAWING OR WRITING, YOU GET TO USE WHOLE BODY TO EXPRESS A CHARACTER! ALSO, I THINK YOU OULD FIND THAT COSPLAY IS ALREADY FAMILIAR TO YOU! I MEAN, WHEN YOU PUT ON COOL CLOTHES OR CUTE CLOTHES DON'T THEY MAKE YOU FEEL DIFFERENT, AKINA? BECOMING A CHARACTER IS JUST AN F THAT! FOR EXAMPLE, I DON'T MUCH CARE FOR THE FEEL- EING SWEATY ON A SUMMER NIGHT, BUT BECAUSE MUSHROOM MASTER LIKES IT, I
DAMNIT! THEY'RE SERVING UP THE OTAKU SPECIAL!!
And it's a double portion!!

S-SEE, I'M AN INTROVERT... AND I'M NOT REALLY GOOD AT TALKING IN FRONT OF PEOPLE
BUT EVEN SO, I CAN COSPLAY... I MEAN, IT MIGHT BE EMBARRASSING AT FIRST, BUT...
AH, S-SORRY, WE ACCIDENTALLY ENDED UP GOING ON ABOUT IT...
N-NO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT... I'm already used to it anyway
IT'S INCREDIBLY, INCREDIBLY FUN!
ぱあっ
Sparkle!
7
B... BUT, I'M NOT AN OTAKU, SO I'M NEVER GONNA COSPLAY NEVER!
There's no way I'll go along with—
OHH! CHECK THAT OUT OVER THERE!!
UGH...
SHE'S SHINING SO MUCH IT'S STARTING TO MAKE ME EMBARRASSED...

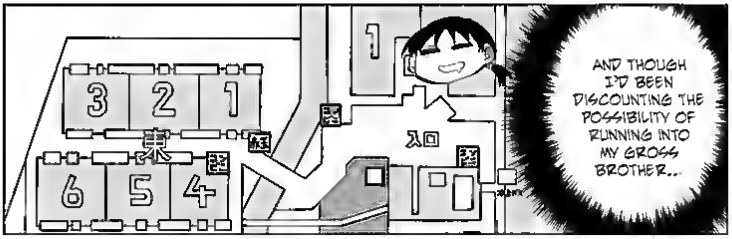
LOOK AT THAT, AMY! THAT GUY, THAT GUY RIGHT THERE!
Whoa!
...WAIT, THAT'S KONATSU!!
And Amy.

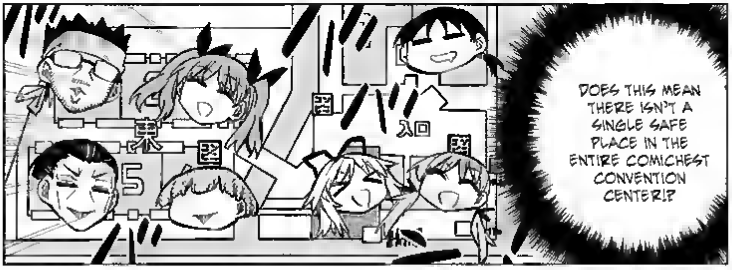
J-JUST WHEN I THOUGHT I'D GIVEN THEM THE SLIP, THEY SHOW UP HERE..
You're going overboard there!
HE'S A MACHO MAN!
HIS MUSCLES ARE SO BIG


SINCE I'D DONE MY RESEARCH, I THOUGHT I COULD AVOID SUFFERING LIKE I DID LAST SUMMER, BUT...
I TOTALLY LET MY GUARD DOWN...

I DIDN'T TAKE PRECAUTIONS FOR DANGEROUS CHARACTERS..

IT'S NOT JUST KONATSU...
THERE'S ALSO THE GROSS OTAKU TRIO AND MISS USUBA...

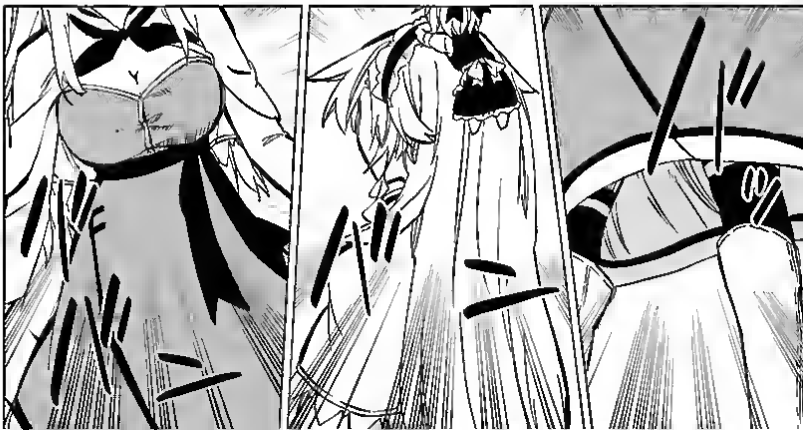

AND THOUGH I'D BEEN DISCOUNTING THE POSSIBILITY OF RUNNING INTO MY GROSS BROTHER...
1
3 2 1
6 5 4
入口

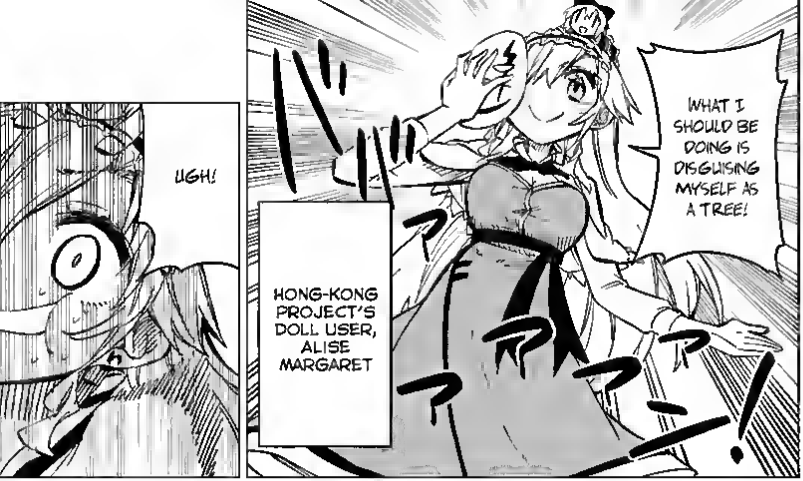

DOES THIS MEAN THERE ISN'T A SINGLE SAFE PLACE IN THE ENTIRE COMICHEST CONVENTION CENTER!?
入口
5

HIBARI AYU!

RIGHT NOW, THE CONVENTION CENTER'S A MINEFIELD... ONE WRONG STEP AND IT'LL BE CERTAIN DEATH!
WHAT SHOULD I DO... WHAT SHOULD I—
Ah!

PLEASE LET ME COSPLAY!
Also, I'd be really happy if it was a character with like a mask or something that'll cover my face!
ド…
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT REQUEST?
YAY! IN THAT CASE, I'VE GOT THE PERFECT CHARACTER~
IN THIS FOREST OF OTAKU, TRYING TO HIDE IN THE SHADOWS OF THE TREES WAS A MISTAKE RIGHT FROM THE START...
YES, I NEED TO REVERSE MY THINKING...



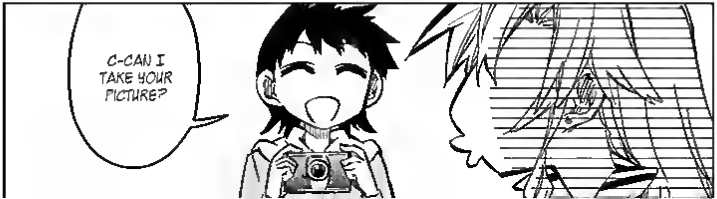

UGH!
HONG-KONG PROJECT'S DOLL USER, ALISE MARGARET
WHAT I SHOULD BE DOING IS DISGUISING MYSELF AS A TREE!

TH-THE BOTTOM'S A LOOSE SKIRT, SO THAT'S FINE, BUT...
THE TOP IS TOO TIGHT!

BECAUSE IT COMES WITH A MASK!
I-I GUESS WE SHOULD GO WITH MY LIBRARIAN COSTUME...
HEHEH THAT'S CUZ THOSE CLOTHES ARE FOR HIBARI
Were they hard for you to put on, Akina?
N NO, IT'S ALRIGHT, THIS ONE'S FINE!

LET'S DO OUR BEST, AKINA—
NO—
NEXT IS...
ALRIGHT! AYU, AKINA— LET'S GO!
YOU'RE DOING IT WRONG, BOTH OF YOU

YOU SHOULD REFER TO ME AS "ALISE"!
WHOA!!
ANTI-NAME COUNTER-MEASURES, COMPLETE!!
NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SLIP INTO THIS CROWD...
AH, UM
HM?
IF I GO AND BUY STUFF LIKE THIS, I'LL JUST BLEND IN WITH THE CROWD...
That's even better stealth!
WAIT, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, COSPLAYING DOESN'T MEAN I NEED TO STAY IN THIS AREA, RIGHT!?


C-CAN I TAKE YOUR PICTURE?

MY MY PICTURE!?
Pic-ture is taken
taken
Uploaded to internet
I'll have no choice but to stain these hands red
Haa Haa
Th- This is
DaT ALISE
So cute!!
So detailed!!
Sorry for cutting in
LIKE HELL IT IS! WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, YOU...

LOOK, YOU YELLED AT HIM AND NOW HE'S SHAKING ALL OVER..
TH-
GREAT, NOW YOU'VE DONE IT! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE JUST ANOTHER COSPLAYER!!
WHAT HAPPENED TO TURNING YOURSELF INTO ALISE!?

I JUST, I JUST !!
UGH!?
EHHHHHHH!?
Whoaaaa
THAT WAS AWESOME! A PERFECT ALISE
IT'S HER TSUNDERE SIDE THAT SHOWS WHAT SHE'S REALLY MADE OF!!

ぴーん
THAT WAS AN AMAZING A-ALISE... I'M SO HAPPY YOU WORE THE C-CLOTHES...
ENOUGH TO BRING YOU TO TEARS!?
NOT BAD, ALISE! IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE QUALIFIED TO STAND SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER WITH THIS MUSHROOM MASTER!
THAT SUITED THE CHARACTER!?

WAIT, WHEN DID WE GET SURROUND-ED !?
W-WELL, THAT'S FINE. THIS WAY I'LL HAVE NO TROUBLE GETTING BY...

I... I NEED TO HURRY UP AND GET OUTTA HERE. IF KONATSU AND AMY FIND ME—
WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE? IS IT SOME KINDA EVENT?
WONDERFUL! IT'S THE ENTRY OF THE COSPLAY WARRIORS!
DAMNIT!

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE I GET FOUND OUT...
I want one without you covering your face
WAIT... HUH?

FLASH ガシャ FLASH ガシャ
Whoa!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, KONATSU!? I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T AN OTAKU, RIGHT!!
AND HOLD ON, DON'T YOU KNOW YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ASK BEFORE YOU TAKE PHOTOS!?

EVEN AMY KNOWS HOW IT'S DONE! WAIT NO, THIS IS BAD! AT POINT-BLANK RANGE LIKE THIS...
WOULD IT BE OKAY IF I TOOK YOUR PICTURE?
YEAH, SURE~

AH, I-IF IT ISN'T KONATSU~
HEY, AREN'T YOU AYU?
You give off a totally different vibe, so I didn't recognise you~
SOMEBODY ELSE GOT FOUND OUT!!

WHEN YOU WEAR A COSTUME, THOSE LOVELY BREASTS STAND EVEN MORE, HUH?
YOU EVEN SEXUALLY HARASS AYU, STUPID KONATSU!?

WAIT, THESE TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
WHICH MEANS THAT TOUKO KNOWS HER TOO. ISN'T THE WORLD A BIT TOO SMALL?

YEAH, LIKE THAT! SHE'S ABOUT THE SAME SIZE AS THAT GIRL THERE
DON'T DISTINGUISH PEOPLE BASED ON THEIR CHEST SIZE!
You damn sexual harassment plaintiff!!

TOUKO ASIDE, I'VE GOT THIS OTHER STACKED FRIEND...

IN THAT CASE!!
D-DAMNIT, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN ESCAPE NOW!
MY ONLY OPTION IS TO BECOME A PERFECT COSPLAYER!
I'VE GOT THE CHARACTER INFORMATION THEY GAVE ME WHILE CHANGING AND THE CAMERAMAN'S REACTION
IF I SYNTHESISE THOSE, THEN I CAN TURN MYSELF INTO ALISE!

ENOUGH PLAYING AROUND!
LET'S DO THIS, MUSHROOM MASTER
AND BOOK DEMON!
THIS IS MY...
BOOOOM

WELL!?
ALL-OUT ALISE!!
Bang!

PLEASE DO A POSE THAT EMPHASIZES YOUR CHEST MORE!
PLEASE!

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY, YOU IDIOT!!
I'm definitely gonna smack you later!!
Yeah!

I... I MADE IT THROUGH IN ONE PIECE!!
I TOOK PLENTY OF LOVELY PHOTOS!
WOW, THAT WAS FUN, HUH?

ALRIGHT, NOW THAT THE DANGER'S PAST, I CAN JUST TAKE IT EASY HERE AND—
Good work out there
JEEZ, THAT WAS SERIOUSLY DANGEROUS. BUT I MADE IT. SOMEHOW.
Thanks
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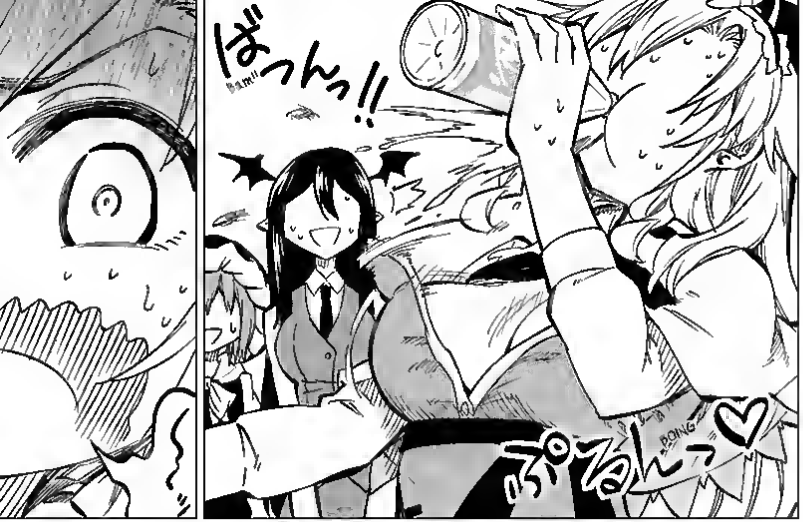
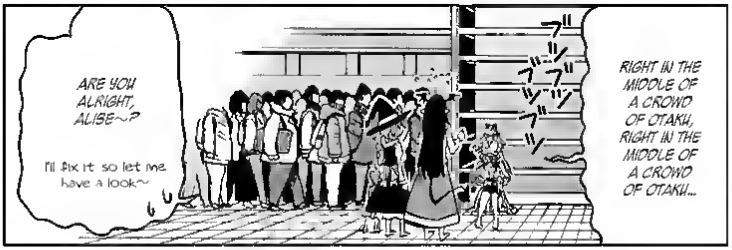
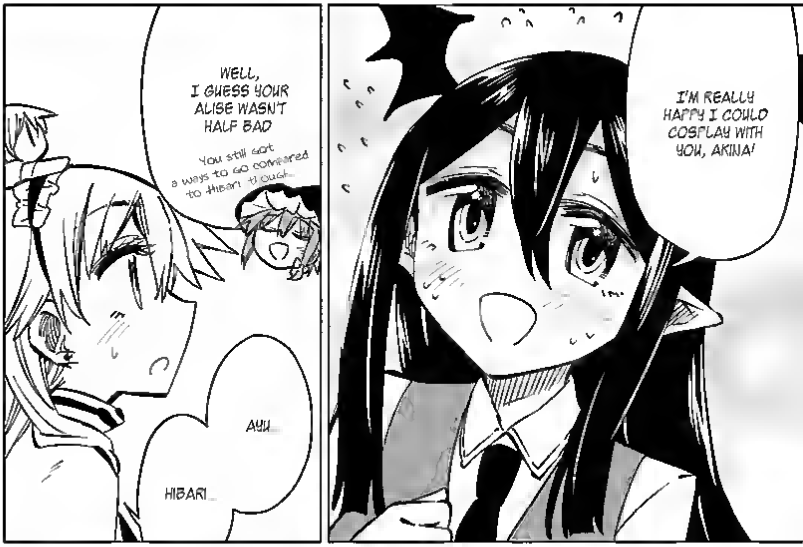

ばっんっ!!
Bam!!
ぷるんっ♡
BOING

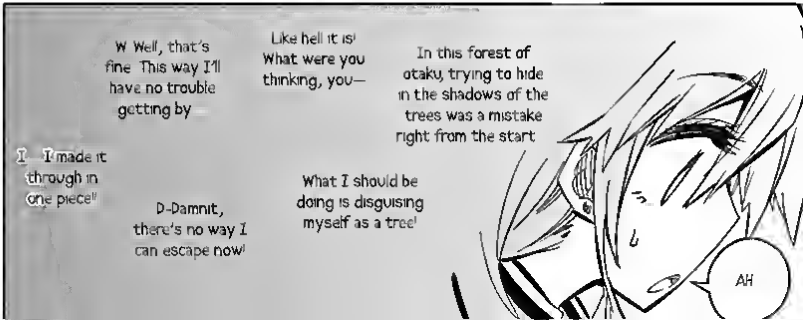
Gyaaaaaaaaaa


ARE YOU ALRIGHT, ALIBE~?
I'll fix it so let me have a look~
RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A CROWD OF OTAKU, RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A CROWD OF OTAKU...

Wow, that's some serious sewing technique
AKINA,
AH, S... SORRY, AYU. YOU WENT THROUGH ALL THIS WORK WITH CLOTHES, AND NOW THEY'RE...
N-NO, IT'S TOTALLY FINE. THIS MUCH IS EASY TO FIX.

THERE WAS THAT ACCIDENT, BUT...
EHH?
THANK YOU FOR COSPLAYING WITH US TODAY


WELL, I GUESS YOUR ALISE WASN'T HALF BAD
You still got a ways to go compared to Hibari though...
AYU...
HIBARI...
I'M REALLY HAPPY I COULD COSPLAY WITH YOU, AKINA!

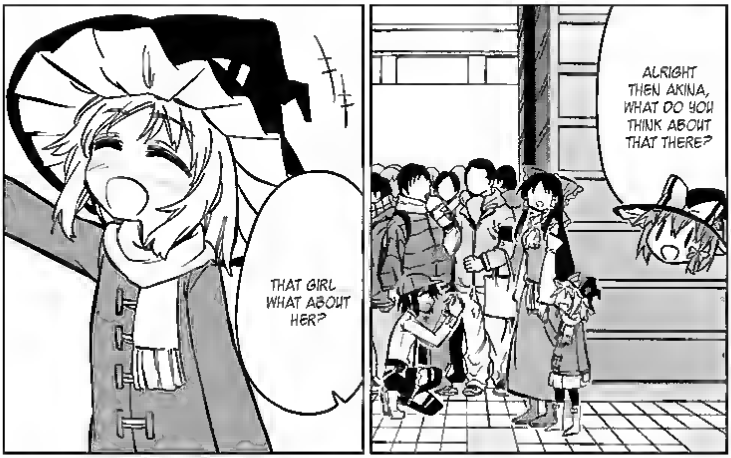

W-Well, that's fine. This way I'll have no trouble getting by—
Like hell it is! What were you thinking, you—
In this forest of otaku, trying to hide in the shadows of the trees was a mistake right from the start
I... I made it through in one piece!!
D-Damnit, there's no way I can escape now!
What I should be doing is disguising myself as a tree!
AH

WAS THAT...
REALLY OKAY WITH YOU?
I MEAN I'M... IT'S MY FIRST TIME COSPLAYING, AND I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HONG KONG PROJECT.
AND I ONLY DID IT TO HIDE FROM KONATSU AND THE REST...
IT FEELS KINDA DISRESPECTFUL TO YOU TWO, SINCE YOU'RE SO SERIOUS ABOUT IT...

EHH!? NO WAY!
I WAS THE ONE WHO PUSHED YOU INTO IT...
DON'T BE STUPID~ WERE YOU REALLY WORRYING ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

HEY— WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "SOMETHING LIKE THAT"?
COSPLAY IS NOT SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO TAKE SERIOUSLY...
EH?

C-CAN YOU REALLY SAY THAT? I MEAN, WHEN YOU'VE PUT SO MUCH WORK INTO IT?
WELL THAT'S BECAUSE HIBARI AND AYU ARE COSPLAY PROS!
AND JUST HOW ARE YOU MAKING MONEY FROM THIS...?

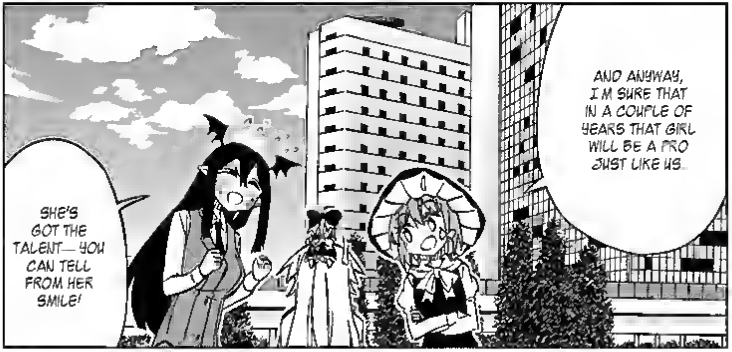

ALRIGHT THEN AKINA, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT THERE?
THAT GIRL WHAT ABOUT HER?

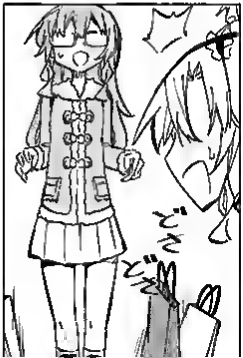
THAT'S A MUSHROOM MASTER COSPLAYER, SAME AS ME
EHH!? IT'S JUST THE HAT, THOUGH!!

HIBARI AND AYU HAVE BEEN PROS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS NOW SO WE'RE A BIT DIFFERENT, BUT...
THAT GIRL'S A COSPLAYER, SAME AS US.
GETTING STARTED JUST BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO LOOK CUTE.
TRYING IT OUT TO KEEP YOUR FRIEND'S COMPANY,

EVERYBODY STARTS WITH SOMETHING LIKE THAT

HIBARI...
AYU...
BECAUSE WHAT MATTERS IS WHETHER OR NOT YOU'RE HAVING FUN!
WITH COSPLAY, YOU CAN COME IN THROUGH WHATEVER DOOR YOU WANT...


SHE'S GOT THE TALENT— YOU CAN TELL FROM HER SMILE!
AND ANYWAY, I'M SURE THAT IN A COUPLE OF YEARS THAT GIRL WILL BE A PRO JUST LIKE US.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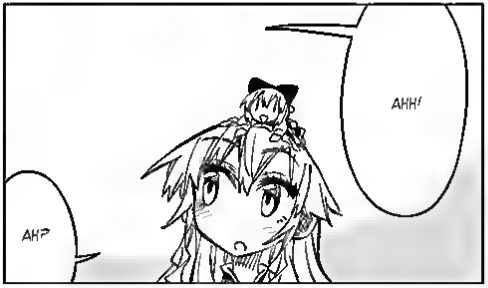
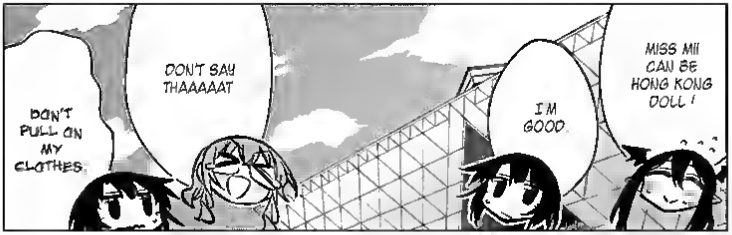
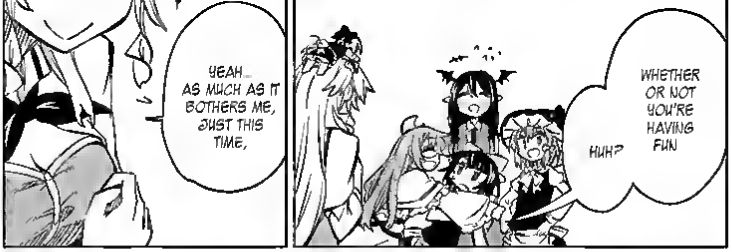

AHH!
AH?

AKINA IS DRESSED UP AS ALISE!!!!!
K... KAEDE!!?
WE MESSAGED HER EARLIER~
OH, THERE YOU ARE, KAEDE
GYEH!?
ばっ
ばっ

THIS IS GOOD, THIS IS SO GOOD... I WANNA COSPLAY WITH AKINA TOO~
WANNA WEAR MY LIBRARIAN COSTUME?
I DO, I DO! YESSS!
THAT'S KAEDE FOR YOU—AN EXPERT AT ENJOYING THINGS

AH...
AH?
What is it this time?


DON'T PULL ON MY CLOTHES
DON'T SAY THAAAAAT
I'M GOOD
MISS MII CAN BE HONG KONG DOLL!



YEAH, LET'S, LET'S!
OKAY, SO THIS SUMMER LET'S ALL COSPLAY AS THE RESIDENTS OF "EIKYUUTEI"!
LET'S SAVE THAT FOR SOME OTHER TIME
WOW, THAT SOUNDS AMAZING~!

AIM TO BE PRO COSPLAYERS!

TO BE CONTINUED

CHECK OUT THE COLLECTED VOLUME TOO!

WE'RE CAUGHT UP TO THE RAWS NOW! YAY!

ANOTHER COSPLAY CHAPTER MEANS ANOTHER TOUHOU CHAPTER! TIME FOR A BIG BUNCH OF TOUHOU REFERENCES

- AS BEFORE, THE NAME "HONG KONG PROJECT" IS A REFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPERS THAT MAKES TOUHOU PROJECT, TEAM SHANGHAI ALICE.

- HIBARI'S "MUSHROOM MASTER" COSTUME IS A REFERENCE TO ONE OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS OF TOUHOU, MARISA KIRISAME. SHE LIKES TO PICK AND COLLECT MUSHROOMS. MARISA X ALICE IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR FANSHIPS

- AYU'S "NAMELESS BOOK DEMON" COSTUME IS A REFERENCE TO KOAKUMA, A SIMILARLY NAMELESS LIBRARY ASSISANT IN TOUHOU. KOAKUMA IS THE NAME THE FANS USE TO REFER TO HER

- AKINA'S COSTUME IS ALICE MARGATROID, A DOLL-USING MAGICIAN IN TOUHOU ALICE DOES NOT IN FACT HAVE ANY SORT OF MASK IN TOUHOU, BUT THE AUTHOR NEEDED AKINA TO HAVE A MASK, AND NONE OF THE MASKED TOUHOU CHARACTERS FIT IN THE SAME GROUP AS THE REST OF THESE CHARACTERS.

- MICCHY'S IS "SHANGHAI DOLL", ONE OF THE DOLLS ALICE CONTROLS IN TOUHOU. IN TOUHOU SHE IS NOT AN ACTUAL CHARACTER, BUT IS JUST AN ABILITY USED BY ALICE. SHE IS HOWEVER POPULAR IN TOUHOU FANDOM, AND FANWORKS HAVE GIVEN HER MORE INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISATION

- KAEDE'S COSTUME IS A REFERENCE TO THE CHARACTER PATCHOULI KNOWLEDGE, THE LIBRARIAN AND KOAKUMA'S BOSS. MARISA OFTEN STEALS BOOKS FROM HER

- THE "EIKYUUTEI" MENTIONED ON THE LAST PAGE IS A REFERENCE TO "EIENTEI", A LOCATION IN TOUHOU. THERE ARE SEVERAL GROUPS OF CHARACTERS IN TOUHOU IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS. THE COSTUMES THIS THEY USED THIS TIME WERE ALL OF CHARACTERS FROM THE "SCARLET DEVIL MANSION," EXCEPT FOR MARISA WHO'S BASICALLY THE MAIN CHARACTER IN TOUHOU.

- THE GIRL WHO ASKS AKINA FOR A PICTURE IS DRESSED AS AYA SHAMEIMARU, A REPORTER IN TOUHOU. THE CAMERA IS PART OF THE COSTUME, IT'S GENIUS!

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